

**CALIFORNIA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
STATE YOUTH COUNCIL
November 20, 2002**

MEETING SUMMARY

On November 20, 2002, the State Youth Council of the California Workforce Investment Board convened in the West Coast Long Beach Hotel, Long Beach, California. The following persons were in attendance:

YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jorge Ayala, Chair
Myeshia Grice, Vice Chair
Steve Arcelona
Ryan Berger
David Crippens
Bernard Davitto
Erin Gabel
Bill Lloyd
Nellie McGarry
David Rattray
Ariel Smoke
Joseph Werner

STAFF

Paul Gussman, Deputy Director
John Merris-Coots
Robert Padilla
Margaret Mack
Suzette Smith

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Deputy Director Paul Gussman introduced himself and welcomed everyone. He reported that Executive Director Andrew Baron was recovering well from his heart surgery and was back in the office.

Mr. Gussman said he and Mr. Baron were pleased with the progress made by the State Youth Council so far and noted the State Youth Council has become a model for others.

Mr. Gussman announced that Mr. Jorge Ayala had been selected to replace Ms. Ann Savage as the State Youth Council chair. He noted Vice Chair Carl Wong had also asked to be replaced, so Ms. Myeshia Grice would be taking the position of vice chair. Mr. Gussman added that Mr. Wong would continue to be a member of the State Youth Council. He congratulated Mr. Ayala and Ms. Grice on their appointments.

Mr. Ayala asked all participants to join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. State Youth Council members then took turns introducing themselves.

Mr. Ayala announced that the Youth Council Institute had received an award from the U.S. Department of Labor. He commended and thanked Ms. Lois Ann Porter and Mr. Steve Trippe. Mr. Ayala drew attention to the handout listing other national award winners.

Mr. Ayala noted that two State Youth Council members, Mr. Orlando Casillas and Mr. Erron Franklin, were attending college and leaving their seats on the State Youth Council. They will be replaced by new representatives from Friday Night Live and the California Association of Student Councils.

City of Long Beach Presentation

Mr. Ray Worden, City of Long Beach Workforce Development Bureau, welcomed the State Youth Council to the City of Long Beach. He noted that Mayor O'Neill also extended her best wishes for the Council's success and recognized the vital importance of youth development issues.

Mr. Worden stated that a recent report by the Center for Labor Market Studies indicates that youth employment last summer was at its lowest rate since the mid-1960's. He emphasized that with recent increases in youth poverty rates, more needs to be done to engage 14-to-24 year old youth. Mr. Worden said the Long Beach Youth Council has embarked on a number of programs to improve workforce opportunities for young people, and he cited the Youth Opportunity Center as an example of a community-based effort that provides training and other services to meet the needs of Long Beach youth. He added that Long Beach has been working to foster collaborations between the school-to-career program, the workforce development system, welfare agencies, community organizations, and private funding sources.

Mr. Worden noted the Workforce Investment Act reauthorization provides an opportunity to make sure more resources are provided to areas of the country with high concentrations of at-risk youth. He urged the State Youth Council and the California Workforce Investment Board to defend the importance of youth workforce readiness programs, advocate for flexible funding, and emphasize the importance of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) resources in addressing the needs of California's youth.

Mr. Darick Simpson, Long Beach Youth Council, also welcomed the State Youth Council to Long Beach. He said the Long Beach Youth Council has enjoyed successes in a number of areas, including development of an effective strategic plan, sponsorship of a productive youth forum last February, adoption of the all-youth, one-system philosophy, and consolidation of the school-to-career initiative with the youth council. He added that Long Beach is fortunate to have a collaborative community with partners from business, political, educational, and civic organizations.

Mr. Simpson noted that statistics released in 2000 indicate Long Beach has approximately 24,000 of its total population of 446,000 people in high school. Although Latino and African-American students constitute a majority of those in high school, they represent a minority of students who graduate with the course requirements needed to enter the UC or CSU systems. He emphasized the importance of helping these young people achieve success and an excellent quality of life. Mr. Simpson said attraction and retention of out-of-school youth are big priorities for the Long Beach Youth Council. He advocated diversification of revenue streams, effective marketing to stakeholders, community support, youth internships, and implementation of the strategic plans as important steps toward the youth council's goals.

Ms. Cecile Harris Walters, Youth Opportunity Center, joined in welcoming the State Youth Council to Long Beach. She added she was pleased to have members touring and meeting at the Youth Opportunity Center the previous day.

Ms. Pheap Lorn, Long Beach Youth Council, stated that her participation in a summer youth employment program opened the doors of opportunity for her and helped supplement her family's income.

Ms. Sary Chheang, Youth Opportunity Center, said she earned her GED through training at the Youth Opportunity Center. She noted that besides general education, the program provided her with computer skills, employability skills, practical internships, and supportive services like childcare that helped her achieve her goals. She reported that she found a job shortly after completing her training and is currently working with a community-based nonprofit organization. She expressed her gratitude to her teachers, mentors, and the staff at the Youth Opportunity Center.

Mr. Brandon Haywood, Long Beach Youth Council, said he began participating at the Youth Opportunity Center when he was 14, and that experience led to a summer job and a paying position with the Boys and Girls Club. He noted the Youth Opportunity Center was instrumental in helping him achieve success. He thanked the Youth Opportunity Center staff for their assistance and guidance, and he encouraged the State Youth Council to continue its work to involve and engage youth so their important input can be heard.

Mr. Ayala and State Youth Council members thanked the presenters and encouraged them in their activities.

Leadership Team Planning Update

Mr. David Rattray reported that the State Youth Council's leadership team met in late October to begin aligning the work of the work groups, developing a proposed work plan, and determining priorities. He said the leadership team reviewed the Youth Council's activities, discussed issues needing attention, moved and realigned some of the work groups' tasks, and developed a goal statement for each work group. Mr. Rattray noted the work group then went on to build a work plan based on specific strategies, outcomes, and deadlines.

Mr. Rattray drew attention to the handout describing the priorities and goals for each work group. In particular, he noted, with WIA reauthorization, the State Youth Council has an opportunity to articulate key issues clearly and provide a powerful voice to advocate for youth programs and funding. He welcomed comments and feedback from State Youth Council members.

Mr. Bill Lloyd asked whether the leadership group developed a strategy for addressing the immediate needs of at-risk youth. Mr. Ayala responded that the Critical Youth Needs Work Group discussed the need to provide a triage system to address both short-term and long-term needs of at-risk youth. He said the work group agreed that collecting data and mapping resources was an important step in determining what is already available and what still needs to be done. Mr. Lloyd emphasized the importance of taking immediate action to tackle the problems of at-risk youth.

Mr. John Merris-Coots said the California Workforce Investment Board is helping with printing and distribution of posters marketing the California Youth Crisis Line, toll-free, 24/7 resource for young people. He noted the Youth Involvement Work Group is also focusing on how to engage young people who are currently not engaged in the youth development system. In addition, the State Board will be adopting a policy for identifying areas of the state with high concentrations of WIA-eligible youth. Mr. Merris-Coots noted Board staff are also working with the Governor's foster youth initiative, an initiative to prevent homelessness by linking emancipated foster youth with the one-stop career center system.

Mr. Bernard Davitto commented that if the system can meet the developmental needs of youth earlier through education and involvement, there will be less of a burden later in dealing with at-risk youth.

Ms. Erin Gabel agreed with Mr. Davitto that more needs to be done in the system to help youth from becoming disengaged. She recommended emphasizing this point in the comprehensive youth plan.

Mr. Ayala commended the leadership team for their progress. He asked State Youth Council members to review the handout and provide additional comments to the staff and leadership team.

Comprehensive State Youth Plan Discussion

Mr. Steve Arcelona referred to the written summary of points and elements to be included in the comprehensive state youth plan. He noted the document covers action steps, the contents of the plan itself, and the process for developing the plan. He explained that the plan is intended to reflect the all-youth, one-system approach.

Mr. Arcelona reviewed and discussed the recommended action steps, including involving and engaging youth; providing connections and resources for youth; effective

implementation of targeted programs; supporting, encouraging, and empowering local youth councils; and laying a groundwork for a comprehensive plan for youth. He discussed important elements in the plan and noted the plan must be inspiring, convey a sense of urgency and a vision of the future, engage and represent the consensus of a full range of stakeholders, define youth as the customer, identify key policy and resource drivers, provide a framework that allows for local flexibility, include action and implementation steps, provide a methodology to strategically leverage all resources, identify governance and policy issues, impact the provision of youth services, be accountable and measurable, and include youth assessment.

Mr. Arcelona described four stages in the process for developing the plan: discovery, planning, drafting, and dissemination.

Mr. David Crippens expressed his opinion that the proposal is moving in the right direction. He observed that dissemination is likely to be a key part of the plan's effectiveness. Mr. Crippens emphasized the importance of making sure the plan articulates the message of why youth involvement is essential. He noted that participation is a critical element of a democratic system, so engagement of youth is essential. Mr. Crippens added that California cannot compete effectively in a global marketplace unless it has a population of well educated and well trained young people.

Mr. Joseph Werner commented that interagency involvement should also be given a high priority because WIA is only a small part of youth services.

Ms. Gabel agreed, and recommended thinking from the beginning about potential champions and partners.

Ms. Nellie McGarry pointed out that the business community also needs to be involved in creating and implementing the plan.

Mr. Lloyd cautioned against creating a bureaucracy that will impede action. He advocated moving forward with making decisions and trying new things.

Mr. Rattray pointed out the State Youth Council needs to move on two tracks simultaneously, one to address immediate and urgent issues, and another to articulate a vision that results in an effective, cohesive system in the long run.

Ms. Grice expressed frustration that lack of funding is often cited as an obstacle to action. She said that instead of spending money on prisons, the state needs to rethink its priorities and start putting money into programs and services that can help youth immediately. Ms. Grice also questioned the need for more research; she advocated for action instead.

Mr. Davitto noted the comprehensive state youth plan needs to be more than just another document that sits on a shelf. He again emphasized the importance of dealing with at-risk youth now as a way of managing the burden on systems later.

Mr. Rattray recommended focusing on playing to win rather than playing not to lose. He agreed with Ms. Grice that the focus of the State Youth Council's efforts needs to be on action and change.

Mr. Ayala commented that all State Youth Council members are expected to participate in work groups and assist with implementing the action steps.

Mr. Lloyd suggested it would be helpful for the staff to provide a highlighted bulleted list with each agenda packet to focus State Youth Council members' attentions on the items of highest priority at each meeting.

Mr. Ayala noted that there are many other stakeholders in the public and private sectors who should be involved in youth development, such as parks and recreation and educational agencies.

Mr. Crippens emphasized the importance of the governor being a strong advocate for funding for youth programs.

Mr. Arcelona commented that the State Youth Council can play a valuable role in gathering input from the field, unifying services, bringing stakeholders together, modeling, and working for changes in legislation to facilitate the efforts of those who provide services to youth.

Mr. Trippe proposed that the State Youth Council determine what it wants to accomplish before the next meeting. He said possibilities include working with the Forum for Youth Investments and inviting Dr. Karen Pittman, a national leader in the youth development field, to make a presentation about how states develop policies; meeting with Senator Dede Alpert to follow up on some of the ideas that surfaced at the California Youth Development Summit; looking at the National Academy of Science's work on how communities organize around promoting youth development; updating the draft paper; convening meetings of representatives from state agencies and departments; and gathering more information.

Mr. Rattray supported inviting Dr. Pittman to make a presentation at the next meeting. Ms. Grice and Ms. Gabel recommended meeting with state agency leaders and key legislators. Mr. Merris-Coots suggested working with Senator Dede Alpert, the Governor's Office, and the Department of Education to follow up on the California Youth Development Summit. Mr. Gussman proposed using local youth councils as a resource; he noted the Youth Council Institute is an effective clearinghouse for information and sharing ideas.

Mr. Trippe observed there seemed to be consensus about working with Dr. Pittman and with the key participants in the Youth Development Summit.

Approval of August 14, 2002 Council Meeting Minutes

State Youth Council members approved the August 14 minutes as submitted.

Public Comment

Ms. Andrea Danielle Selva, Commission for Children, Youth and their Families, urged the State Youth Council to work for greater flexibility in funding. She suggested developing a college fund for at-risk youth and other youth who need financial assistance.

Mr. Rattray encouraged Ms. Selva and others to consider applying for Cal grants. He noted there will be a statewide College Goal Sunday event to help youth fill out their state and federal grant forms, and he urged the State Youth Council to promote this event.

Mr. Crippens noted the City of Los Angeles will be holding a Cash for College weekend event to help high school seniors fill out financial aid forms.

Lunch Presentation

During the lunch recess, State Youth Council members watched a video about South Central Los Angeles created by youth from a WIA-funded program at the Bresee Foundation.

Mr. Jeff Carr, Executive Director, Bresee Foundation, Mr. Jerrold Kress, Bresee Multimedia Instructor, James Lau, the Children's Partnership, and Richard Chabran, Community Digital Initiative at UC Riverside and the California Community Technology Policy Group (CCTPG) described the Pathways to Our Future statewide multi-media project.

Work Group Reports

Youth Involvement

Ms. Gabel reported that the Youth Involvement Work Group has been focusing its attention on ensuring broad representation on the Youth Advisory Council (YAC). She said an interim YAC meeting was tentatively scheduled for January 18, 2003, and representatives from each local youth council in California will be invited. Ms. Gabel noted the purpose of the meeting is to provide input on the comprehensive state youth plan and make plans for a larger conference on March 30. At that time, the youth representatives will decide on their structure, role, and functions.

Ms. Gabel proposed that the Youth Involvement Work Group become a formal oversight body for the YAC to keep that group moving forward. She recommended that Ms. Grice convene the first meeting until the YAC determines its own structure and selects a chair.

Mr. Rattray noted the California Workforce Association will be sponsoring a youth conference February 11 to 13, and he recommended that the State Youth Council send some representatives. He noted the State Youth Council should also work to facilitate meaningful youth involvement on local youth councils.

Mr. Ayala suggested that the Youth Involvement Work Group consider inviting representatives of the California Department of Education regional coordination project to attend the January meeting and report on their activities.

Ms. Ariel Smoke encouraged State Youth Council members to invite local youth to attend the interim meeting. She noted involvement on a local youth council is not required in order to come.

Critical Youth Needs

Mr. Ayala reported that the Critical Youth Needs Work Group plans to look at priorities and develop a statewide resource and services database for youth. Once the group identifies what entities are providing services to youth and how they are connected, they will be able to discuss ways the State Youth Council can work to support their efforts.

Mr. Ayala said the work group is also working with the California Coalition for Youth to print and distribute posters publicizing their Youth Crisis Line.

Mr. Ayala noted the staff has been working on the Governor's foster youth initiative to connect foster youth with the one-stop system.

Workforce Investment Act Issues

Mr. Arcelona reviewed the priority objectives for the WIA Issues Work Group. He noted the group will be developing recommendations pertaining to WIA reauthorization as well as other legislation up for reauthorization.

Mr. Arcelona drew attention to the list of recommendations from the National Youth Employment Coalition and pointed out their ideas are consistent with many of the thoughts expressed at State Youth Council meetings.

Mr. Arcelona noted the U.S. Department of Labor's audit of WIA implementation in California contained a finding that the state has not yet identified areas with high concentrations of WIA-eligible youth. The work group has reviewed and approved elements that should be considered in the creation of a "high concentrations" state policy. In order to ensure that all areas, both urban and rural, would have access to funding, the proposed policy provides three methods for defining areas with high concentrations of eligible youth: greatest density of WIA-eligible youth to total youth population; greatest disparity between the number of WIA-eligible youth and the number of youth served; and greatest concentration of hardest-to-serve youth, as defined by local areas.

Mr. Merris-Coots said the proposed policy will be forwarded to the State Board for approval, and then to the Employment Development Department for drafting and public review. He noted this process provides opportunities for additional feedback on the actual policy.

Mr. Rattray proposed sending a delegation to the NAWIB conference March 2 through 4 to meet with elected officials and advocate for youth development programs. Mr. Merris-Coots suggested that the staff work with CWA, the National Youth Employment Coalition, and the WIA Issues Work Group to identify issues of importance to local areas and then report back at the January 29 meeting. He added that based on that information, the State Youth Council can plan feedback for NAWIB conference in March. Mr. Werner said the League of Cities, NACO, CWA, and other organizations will be lobbying for particular issues and developing white papers describing their positions, and he suggested reviewing their materials.

Mr. Gussman noted the State Board has been working with a group of large states to discuss areas of common concern such as youth eligibility and universal access. He said that group might also be a vehicle for identifying particular issues that should be brought up at the NAWIB conference.

Ms. Barbara Foster, regional coordinator, noted it would be very helpful to advocate for stronger language in the reauthorization process for the all-youth, one-system philosophy.

Comprehensive Youth-Serving System

Mr. Rattray said the Comprehensive Youth-Serving System Work Group defined its mission as supporting, encouraging, and empowering local youth councils. He noted the group's top priority is to identify and support local areas that effectively integrate, collaborate, and leverage to support the all-youth, one-system approach. To further that goal, the work group is concentrating on working with the Youth Council Institute and promote branding of the all-youth, one-system logo. Mr. Rattray noted that at the last meeting, the State Youth Council approved sending a letter to all local youth council chairs urging them to embrace the all-youth, one-system philosophy. He said 29 of the 50 local youth councils are now participating. As a follow-up, the work group will be sending another letter by mid-January asking whether they have embraced the philosophy and soliciting comments about their programs. Mr. Rattray proposed sending each youth council a copy of the draft comprehensive state youth plan as well.

Mr. Rattray said the second major task the work group will undertake is developing a series of measures to evaluate what local youth councils are doing with the all-youth, one-system approach. He noted the measures will be in the form of a number of indicators rather than prescriptive rules. Mr. Rattray said YCI is already working on indicators, so the work group will use their products as well. He added this task should be completed by February 15.

Ms. Gabel asked if local youth councils will be provided assistance with resource mapping. Mr. Rattray responded that YCI is already helping local youth councils with that work. Mr. Merris-Coot added that YCI has held at least one conference call on that topic. Mr. Rattray added that the State Youth Council will continue supporting YCI's programs in that regard.

Public Comment

Ms. Nancy Ambriz, Ventura County Youth Council, expressed her appreciation to the State Youth Council for all their hard work on behalf of California's youth. She provided a "State of the Workforce" report compiled by Ventura County and offered to mail additional copies to interested people.

State Youth Council Member Announcements

Mr. Rattray noted January is National Mentoring Month, and Groundhog Job Shadow Day happens soon after that. He said the State Youth Council should promote and support mentoring programs.

Mr. Werner reported that Monterey County gifted a totem pole sculptured by a local youth employment and training group to New York City. The sculpture, 25 feet tall and 6,000 pounds, was created to commemorate the tragedy of September 11, and it was recently installed at the front of the Bronx Zoo.

Mr. Ayala noted the Yolo County Youth Council finalized a work-ready certification, which is now being presented to the Chamber of Commerce so local employers can use it in their communities.

Other Business

There were no items of other business considered by the State Youth Council.

Next Steps

Mr. Ayala noted the State Youth Council agreed to focus on issues facing at-risk youth, providing input on upcoming reauthorizations, articulating issues at national meetings, and completion of the comprehensive state youth plan. Dr. Karen Pittman and Senator Dede Alpert will be invited to make presentations at the January meeting. Mr. Ayala asked the staff to provide a bulleted summary page with future agendas to highlight key issues. He said the State Youth Council will forward the policy on identifying high concentrations of eligible youth and solicit feedback from the State Board on the comprehensive state youth plan at its December 12 meeting.

Mr. Ayala announced that the next meeting of the State Youth Council will be held on January 29, 2003, at the Tsakopoulos Library Galleria in Sacramento from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Merris-Coots noted a calendar showing 2003 State Youth Council meetings was available.

Mr. Ayala thanked all participants and expressed his appreciation to State Youth Council members, presenters, and youth who spoke at the meeting. Mr. Ayala added that times of budget constraints present opportunities for collaboration and partnership. As an example, he noted the UC system is beginning to work with the K-12 school system and county offices. He encouraged State Youth Council members to think of creative ways of

working together to leverage scarce resources.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.